

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Hayes Lemmerz International, Inc.

Kentucky Manufacturing Assistance Center

Hayes Lemmerz International Keeps On Rolling With Lean Manufacturing

Client Profile:

Hayes Lemmerz International is one of the world's leading global suppliers of automotive and commercial highway wheels, brakes, power trains, suspensions, structural, and other lightweight vehicle components for the automotive and commercial highway industries. The company's Commercial Highway Products facility, one of two Kentucky-based Hayes Lemmerz plants, is located in Berea, Kentucky. The 100 employees at the Berea facility produce a variety of brake drums, hubs, wheels, rims, and associated parts.

Situation:

Hayes Lemmerz International (HLI) is a proponent of the productivity improvement principles and continuous improvement techniques of lean manufacturing. To help meet corporate goals of improving customer satisfaction, lowering costs, and training employees, the Berea management team implemented a series of lean projects to eliminate wastes.

During this process, the management team discussed the need to verify the results of internal lean efforts and began looking outside for knowledgeable lean manufacturing professionals to help evaluate continuous improvement projects, as well as advise them on other beneficial lean approaches. HLI's search led it to the Kentucky Manufacturing Assistance Center (KMAC), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:

KMAC assessed HLI's continuous improvement projects and recommended the training and application of value stream mapping (VSM) as a key technique for streamlining overall work processes. VSM can also serve as a basis for developing a clear and more detailed approach to lean implementation efforts. HLI chose its Centrifuse Brake Drum line as the focus of a VSM pilot project to evaluate the impact and results of the technique.

Following training for 12 key management personnel, KMAC implemented the VSM process of creating current and future state maps. This process gave the management team the ability to map the flow of the product from the receipt of raw materials to the shipping of the finished product, which in turn helped them to identify process wastes and develop a plan for eliminating those wastes.

Results:

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Improved customer satisfaction.
Reduced lead time and work-in-process.
Decreased costs.
Improved employee skills.
Lowered unit labor costs.

Testimonial:

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